DAY 16 · Part 2 · How We Got Here

A chat window, not the model, changed the world? — 2022: ChatGPT

Five-Minute AI Lessons · Sep 22, 2026

Not a bigger model, but a window you could talk to, made AI something for everyone.

In a nutshell

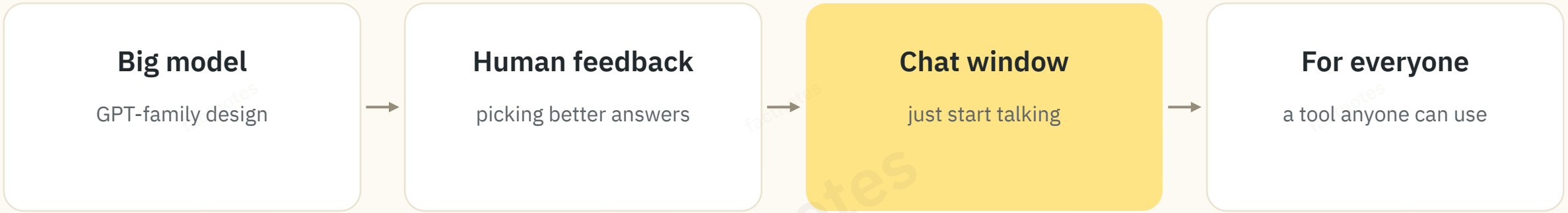
1. On November 30, 2022, a model from the GPT family you met yesterday was put inside **a chat window where you could talk back and forth** and opened up to everyone. That was ChatGPT.

2. Nobody invented a brand-new model. The big thing was polishing it using **which answers people liked better**, so it actually understood what you asked it to do.

3. So what changed that day wasn't the technology, it was **who got to use it**. Something only people who knew how to add examples could use became something everyone used.

In one picture

How a big model became 'something anyone uses'



With only the left box, things were quiet. Once the two boxes on the right were added, the world noticed.

Key idea: what changed the world wasn't a bigger model, but 'a window you could talk to'

Experiment · Before & after

2020 vs. 2022: what changed?

How you use it

Before

It was a box that continued whatever text you typed in. To get what you wanted, you had to writ...

After

You just talk to it. Type 'help me with my homework' and it asks you back and answers. It remem...

What changed wasn't the model, it was the window. Once that barrier disappeared...

Getting what you mean

Before

Ask it to 'summarize this,' and sometimes it would just keep writing similar sentences instead....

After

People picked which of two answers was better, and those picks were collected to polish it agai...

In the research team's tests, people liked the answers of a polished model with...

Who uses it

Before

Mostly developers and researchers. You had to know a bit of code just to get through the door.

After

Middle schoolers and grandmas alike talk to it on their phones. Homework, cooking, translating,...

This was the day the tech stepped over the threshold into everyday life. People...

Pick an item and switch back and forth between 2020 and 2022. If you can see what changed besides the model's s...

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Quick check

Just three questions

Q1

What's the biggest reason ChatGPT surprised the world?

① It invented a whole new design
② It was faster than the internet
③ Anyone could use it just by talking to it
④ It grew to 1 trillion numbers

Q2

What did polishing with human feedback show?

① The bigger model always won
② Answers always got longer
③ Results were the same at any size
④ People preferred a 1.3B model over a 175B one

Q3

What year did ChatGPT first come out?

① 2022
② 2020
③ 2017
④ 2025

Know the why, too

Q1

③

The model family wasn't that different from before. What changed was a window where you could just talk to it, even if you didn't know how to add examples.

Q2

④

When people's picks were collected and used for polishing, people liked a much smaller model's answers better. A sign that size isn't everything.

Q3

①

November 30, 2022. 2017 was the Transformer, and 2020 was GPT-3.

Not a bigger model, but a window you could talk to, made AI something for everyone.

Tomorrow: Thinking before answering — a model that writes out its work before it answers.